

THE QUILL

A MAGAZINE FOR JOURNALISTS



SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT IN SYRIA

February, 1951

During the 1940s, when Soviet-backed forces, Communists and Syrians took the Middle East, the Quill was the only magazine in the world to have been printed in the Middle East. It was the only magazine in the world to have been printed in the Middle East.

25 Cents

Bylines in This Issue

ONE of America's most widely read contemporary authors, **Philip Wylie** was best known for his fishing stories and one unusual book—"Finnley Wrenn"—until 1942. Then from his clinking typewriter rolled "Generation of Vipers," "Night Unto Night," "Essay on Morals," and he acquired a reputation as one of the top literary hell-raisers of all time.

"What Freedom of What Press" (page 10) is a sample of the way Wylie loves to tear into sacred cows. In the interest of conserving journalistic blood vessels and mental fuses, the editors of *THE QUILL* point out that Wylie has also attacked the church as "a rock colossus of bigotry," the public schools as "instruments of stupidity and lies," and American statesmen as "pinheads and stoopnagles."

With his wife and daughter, he lives in a shiny new modernistic house set in a four-acre wooded estate some five miles from downtown Miami. In his study, or work-shop as he calls it, he often turns out his lengthy fishing stories in four hours. He wrote "Generation of Vipers" in seven weeks, about 200 working hours.

He writes a Sunday column for the *Miami Daily News*, breaks into print on other days when something bites him strongly enough to arouse his emotions—usually wrath. Several years ago he took on the United States Public Health Service, Florida State Board of Health and local government and sanitation officials over sewage pollution of Miami's Biscayne Bay.

Wylie was initiated into Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalism fraternity, at the Miami Beach Convention last November. He described the ceremony, strange to say, as "impressive and beautiful."

TWENTY years experience in radio and newspaper journalism is behind **Charter Heslep's** keen analysis of radio's responsibilities in the present crisis (page 8). Born in Richmond, Va., he was graduated from Richmond College. For 12 years he was on the *Washington Daily News* as reporter, city editor, news editor and managing editor.

In 1940, he moved to New York City as night news editor for NBC and in 1942 became chief radio news censor under Byron Price of the Office of Censorship. In 1944 he became Washington manager for Mutual and in that post directed coverage of Roosevelt's death, V-J Day and the birth of United Nations in San Francisco. On the side, he was executive editor of Congressional Quarterly News Features, a specialized news syndicate giving detailed coverage of Congress.

During the 1948 campaign, Heslep, as a Mutual correspondent, travelled 26,000 miles with the Truman caravan. He reports wryly that he predicted HST's defeat! He collaborated with Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy on his memoirs, "I Was There," and with Senator Estes Kefauver on "20th Century Congress." He has also written a number of magazine articles. He's a member of NARND, National Press Club, Inquiring and the President's Committee on Aid to the Physically Handicapped.

As chief of the radio-television branch, Public Information Service, Atomic Energy Commission, Heslep's principal duties are acting as editorial consultant

on television and radio programs dealing with atomic energy.

IN describing the role of radio newscasters if an enemy attacks this country, Charter Heslep touches on the qualifications of a radio newsmen. This theme is developed in detail in another excellent article by **Karl Koerper** (page 13). He points out that a radio newsmen must not only be able to get news and judge it but must be trained to write it for the ear, instead of



KARL KOERPER

the eye, and broadcast it effectively. Based on a talk given at Madison, Wis., last fall before the Association for Education in Journalism, the article stresses sound journalistic education plus experience.

Koerper has had both. A University of Kansas journalism graduate, he has been active in fields from lithography to radio and from advertising to editing *The Christian*, national religious magazine. For the last eleven years he has been managing director of the Midland Broadcasting Company, owner of Kansas City's Stations KMBC and KFRM. He was a founder of the Council on Radio Journalism and served as wartime OWI radio consultant for Missouri.

Koerper's numerous civic activities have included leadership in the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross, Kansas City's American Royal Livestock Show and its Philharmonic Association. He is a trustee of the William Allen White Foundation for journalism at his Alma Mater and a member of Sigma Delta Chi.

AFTER listening to three nationally known columnists explain themselves in the first person singular at Miami last November, the editor of *THE QUILL* devoted his December column to the handicaps, real and fancied, imposed by the editorial "we." In this issue a fellow editorial writer, **Charles C. Clayton** of the *St. Louis Globe Democrat*, takes some bigger gauge "Pot Shots at the Ivory Tower" (page 7). *THE QUILL* is willing to continue this kind of war almost indefinitely.

Charlie Clayton, like so many editorial writers, came to his own ivory tower (which is a pleasant suburb of his paper's big and pleasant newsroom) after years as a reporter and deskman. On the staff of the *Globe Democrat* since 1925, he served a thorough apprenticeship as a reporter before becoming city editor and eventually an editorial writer. A souvenir of his city staff days is "Newspaper Reporting Today," a standard textbook for students of journalism.

A native of Nebraska, he reported for the *Lincoln Star* while attending the University of Nebraska. Transferring to Missouri's school of journalism, he was a student assistant to its late, great Dean Walter Williams and has since been president of its alumni and a director of the Walter Williams Foundation at Co-

lumbia. He teaches the only off-campus Missouri journalism course, in St. Louis, and has classes at Lindenwood College for women in neighboring St. Charles. Clayton is a vice-president of Sigma Delta Chi and has given yeoman service to the journalistic fraternity as chairman of its committee on ethics and in other posts.

ROBERT E. BLACK, who tells how one Czech, Josef Josten, is fighting the Communist caplars of his country with a mimeographed news service that claims some notable beats (page 15), is, like Charlie Clayton, a St. Louis newspaperman. A reporter for the *Star-Times*, he had previously been on the staff of the Rockford Ill. *Morning Star*. A war veteran who served in Europe, he took degrees at Wayne University and the University of Minnesota school of journalism.

"My first knowledge of Josten," Black writes, "came from a Czech newspaperman now in this country, whose background I know firsthand from his family and personal observations in Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1948. The Czech press has been an especial interest of mine since I married a Czech refugee and turned to newspaper work myself. I wrote master's degree papers on the subject at the University of Minnesota and later wrote a review of Czech press history for the *Journalism Quarterly*."

GEORGE BEEBE, president of the American Association of Sunday and Feature Editors, explains how this organization born of the American Press Institute seminar at Columbia University is paying off in better Sunday magazine and feature sections (page 17).

A native of Pittsfield, Mass., Beebe was graduated from the Boston University school of journalism at the height of the depression. He says he collected as fine a batch of autographs from managing editors not in need of his services as any journalism graduate ever gathered before getting a job on the *Billings* (Mont.), *Gazette*.

He was the *Gazette's* city editor when he transferred to the Jacksonville (Fla.) *Times-Union* as telegraph editor in 1944. Beebe joined the staff of the *Miami Herald* in 1945. After serving as state and assistant city editor, he became Sunday editor.



GEORGE BEEBE

MOST newspapermen have at some time or other picked up an extra (and welcome) buck by "stringing" for another paper. (This is quite aside from doing the same thing for a mutual wire service like the Associated Press for which members are required to furnish local news.) Much stringing is done for a far larger metropolitan paper which is not in direct competition with the stringer's own circulation. The big paper is not interested in most local news; it wants only special coverage of the exceptional story.

But this is not always the case and the

(necessarily) anonymous young author of "I Work for My Competitor" (page 12) cites a case that must be fairly common where very small dailies are in sharp competition with larger ones nearby. His reason for writing the article, he says, is the hope that it will open up some controversy. He adds:

"To further disqualify myself as an expert, I finished my journalism school only last June. Perhaps this is why I am still worried about such ethical problems, and if so, we shall hope that such worries wear away before the virgin becomes something else."

THOSE who want to know more about the cover of this issue will be pleased to learn that Hal Boyle was able to complete "Assignment Snooky" and delivered little Shina Chung Sook safely to her father in Taegu behind the American lines. Bill Shinn, reporter for the Associated Press, is "Snooky's" real life uncle and Bill Waugh her American godfather.

RUSSELL F. ANDERSON, whose recent survey of diminishing American press coverage overseas is the subject of the editor's monthly column in this issue, is no stranger to *THE QUILL*. In the March, 1948, issue, he told how McGraw-Hill set up and operates its *World News*.

World News is a foreign service tailored for a specific job—to service McGraw-Hill's string of thirty-odd technical, business and scientific publications. As a result, its seventy correspondents and ten bureaus do a highly specialized job of reporting.

But "specialized" does not mean a narrow field for the cables, teletypes, letters and phone calls that go across Anderson's desk from every part of the civilized world may deal with anything from politics to production figures and comptometers to copper.

"And sometimes," Anderson says, "I get news from uncivilized places too. Nature shows a total disregard for where she places industry's raw materials."

A journalism graduate of the University of Michigan, in whose *Quarterly Review* his survey of the decline in overseas correspondents appeared, Anderson worked on Detroit and Pittsburgh newspapers before joining the *International News Service* in Chicago. In 1938 he went to Europe for *INS*.

After four years abroad, he served in the Navy as an intelligence and information officer before returning to New York in 1945 to help organize *World News*, of which he is editor. He reports that he will gladly forward reprints of the survey to anyone interested.

THE EDITORS of *THE QUILL* trust readers will have no difficulty in adjusting themselves to "Bylines in This Issue." This column of comment on the magazine's content and contributors replaces the biographical sketches which for many years have appeared separately with each article.

The editors believe this approach will permit greater latitude in discussing both ideas about journalism and the men behind the ideas. They feel such background is especially important to proper understanding and evaluation of the content of a professional publication.

It follows that "Bylines in This Issue" need not limit itself exclusively to the current issue of the magazine. It can also give *THE QUILL* a forum it has lacked.

THE QUILL for February, 1951



Advertisement

From where I sit by Joe Marsh

Blue Wins This "Hunt"

Cappy Miller's coon dogs—except for Old Blue—are about the finest hounds in the county. Blue's too friendly and easygoing to care much about hunting. He doesn't act the way we think a good dog should, so we figured he'd never amount to much.

But a fellow comes around Saturday looking for a good dog to photograph for some advertising. And the dog he picks is Blue! Says Blue's happy face is just the one to attract people's attention. So Cappy gets more money for that picture than his other dogs will ever take in hunt prizes.

From where I sit, that should teach us not to look down on humans, when they act differently than we think they should. For instance, maybe you think tea goes best with food. O.K.—but don't size up wrong the man who enjoys a beer at mealtime.

Like Blue, I guess we're all "different" in one way or another—but that doesn't mean we don't have our good points, too!

Joe Marsh

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SIGMA DELTA CHI AWARDS IN JOURNALISM

Nominations for the 1950 Awards in Journalism to be made by Sigma Delta Chi, Professional Journalistic Fraternity, are invited now. Nominations may be made by the author of the work, the publication or radio station or any other party. All awards, except for Public Service in Newspaper, Radio and Magazine Journalism, are offered to individuals on the basis of specific work done by Americans and published or broadcast or televised in the United States during the period of January 1, 1950 to December 31, 1950. Awards are offered for excellence in the following fields:

- * General Reporting: For a distinguished example of a reporter's work.
- * Radio Reporting: For a distinguished example of spot news reporting for radio or television.
- * Magazine Reporting: For a distinguished example of current events reporting appearing in a magazine of general circulation.
- * Editorial Writing: For a distinguished example of an editor's work.
- * Editorial Cartooning: For a distinguished example of a cartoonist's work.
- * Radio Newswriting: For a distinguished example of a radio newscaster's or commentator's work.
- * Washington Correspondence: For a distinguished example of a Washington correspondent's work.
- * Foreign Correspondence: For a distinguished example of a foreign correspondent's work.
- * News Picture: For an outstanding example of a news photographer's work.
- * Public Service in Newspaper Journalism: For an important public service rendered by a newspaper in which exceptional courage or initiative is displayed. Nominations are to be accompanied by a complete file of clippings together with a statement of facts concerning the circumstances which prompted the newspaper in its undertaking and the results obtained.
- * Public Service in Radio Journalism: For an outstanding example of public service by an individual radio station or network through radio journalism.
- * Public Service in Magazine Journalism: For an exceptionally noteworthy example of public service rendered editorially or pictorially by a magazine of general circulation. Nominations to be accompanied by a complete file of clippings together with a statement of facts concerning the circumstances which prompted the magazine in its undertaking and the results obtained.
- * Research About Journalism: For an outstanding investigative study about journalism based upon original research, either published or unpublished and completed during 1950.

Nominations are not made on any specific form; but each must be accompanied by clippings or manuscript or recording (in radio division) with the name of the author, name of publication or broadcasting station, and date of publication or broadcast. Also, a statement revealing the circumstances under which the assignment was fulfilled should accompany the nomination, providing the circumstances were of significance. Manuscripts, clippings and recordings will not be returned unless upon written request accompanying the entry.

JUDGING—The material submitted for consideration for the awards offered to individuals will be judged by a jury of veteran and distinguished journalists. All decisions will be final.



Any award may be withheld in case the judges decide that none of the material submitted is worthy of special recognition.

February 15, 1951, Deadline for Nominations

Nominations and accompanying material must be received by February 15, 1951 and should be addressed to:

Professional Awards Committee
Sigma Delta Chi
35 East Wacker Drive
Chicago 1, Illinois

If additional information is desired write Victor E. Bluedorn, Executive Director, Sigma Delta Chi, at above address.

The awards proper consist of bronze medallions with accompanying certificates.

PLEASE CLIP THIS ANNOUNCEMENT AND POST ON YOUR BULLETIN BOARD

THE QUILL

A Magazine for Journalists

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No. 2

The Vanishing Foreign Correspondent

HAS the American press, at a time when knowledge of both our friends abroad and our enemies is of vital importance, been dangerously reducing foreign news coverage? One foreign news editor says so. He is Russell F. Anderson, boss of *World News*, the unique foreign service maintained by McGraw-Hill to service its business and technical magazines. Writing in the current *Quarterly Review* of the University of Michigan, he declares himself worried "because of what I see happening to American press coverage overseas."

"Five years ago," Anderson says, "there were 2,700 U. S. foreign correspondents; today there are less than 300. . . . That the overseas press ranks should be thinned at the end of the war was only natural. But that the dilution should be so complete as to eliminate eight out of every nine is another matter. What this means to the United States—in desperate need of eyes and ears in all parts of the globe—needs no dramatic explanation."

Anderson is neither an outsider nor a visionary. He was newspaper reporter and press association foreign correspondent before heading *World News*. He directs bureaus from London to Bombay and to Rio de Janeiro. His report is a service to journalism—and a challenge.

It was based on a six months survey of foreign correspondents. With the aid of his own men abroad, Anderson made a "census" of American correspondents in seventy countries. He checked his figures with press associations, radio networks and the few newspapers which maintain their own foreign services. He sent questionnaires to 500 present and former correspondents.

Anderson's final results were reached late last August. The increasing tempo of the Korean conflict and the rising temperature of the Cold War everywhere have no doubt put more American newsmen overseas by now. But probably not many, outside Korea and Tokyo. His summary is undoubtedly still valid. It was best expressed in two words: Woefully inadequate. There were excuses, especially from foreign news editors, but few denials.

A MAJOR point made by Anderson is that inadequate foreign reporting tends to deny advance buildup on dangerous situations. Korea was a perfect case. After the United States intervened, correspondents in Korea quickly mounted into the hundreds. But before the shooting war, as Anderson points out, American newsmen in Korea could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

"Americans were thunderstruck," he writes, "when they picked up their newspapers of June 25 and learned that a vast army was on the move. Hardly any of them had the slightest idea that a major conflict was in the making, much less any understanding of the issues at

stake. What little news coverage there had been in Korea . . . was so minor that it had had no conditioning effect." (I was in touch with a news desk that Sunday and while I was not exactly thunderstruck by trouble in Asia, I had no inkling of what lay ahead. At that time, I should have picked Korea as the Asiatic nation least likely to succeed militarily.)

Should the Cold War break into flames today in Greece, Iran or other danger spots, Anderson feels, the same lack of conditioning would prevail. I am not so sure of this at this date because Korea has taught us a lesson. The press has not poured correspondents into such countries, true; but it has drawn on men who know them to publish background material and has kept a sharp eye on them.

OF course, Anderson found that the basic reason for the steady decrease in foreign correspondents was economic. They cost money. They cost more money each year. Newspapers and radio networks, like other business, are caught between costs and taxes and go around turning out lights.

Nine months ago any managing editor would confidently have given another reason—one also noted in Anderson's survey. Despite the rumblings of fresh trouble, people wanted to forget war and read other news. The story any cable editor heard was "Keep it short" and "Who cares about that when we can't even get our local news in the paper?" That argument has weakened with Korea, and Eisenhower's command in Europe.

Foreign news is back on Page One. Events each day are easing some of the sting of Anderson's "woefully inadequate." I also hope that the public continues to wake up to its responsibility to read the foreign news we print or broadcast. I will go so far as to hope that the specter of an atomic cloud will change human nature sufficiently to make it lose, temporarily, some of its appetite for cheesecake and "what happened to the girl next door."

I believe the news services are trying to make up in energy and direction what they may lack in manpower. They no longer regard a foreign correspondent as a sedentary gentleman who inhabits a comfortable London or Paris office and does his daily stint by phoning his friends and reading the local newspapers. They fly him here and there. They order him out to talk to the Englishman at his counter, the Frenchman at his cafe, the Asiatic who is skeptical of white man's democracy.

A smaller group of men can do a lot with this old-fashioned type of reporting. Here and there they are doing it. People are reading it. If they read it, they are likely to demand more. If they demand more, it will be forthcoming—even while newsprint goes up in price and taxes bite harder and harder.

CARL R. KESLER

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reporter is the city editor's
leg man



but

Reporter is the paper
both work for



A Reporter reporter reported that the Reporter could use an experienced reporter.—Sounds like double-talk, but the meaning is clear. It's clear because capital and lower-case initials are used properly.

When you refer to Coca-Cola by its friendly abbreviation, Coke, your meaning is clear only if you use a capital "C." Coke is a proper name—a synonym for Coca-Cola. And correct usage calls for the capital initial always. With a lower-case initial, the word stands for something else entirely.

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gently. So, for this reason as well as to encourage clear usage and proper usage, we keep asking you to write Coke with a capital "C"—please.

Ask for it either way
... both trade-marks
mean the same thing.



THE COCA-COLA COMPANY

THE QUILL for February, 1951

Are threadbare phrases too often a substitute
for courage and hard work on the editorial page?
Such clichés afford this editorial writer these

Pot Shots at the Ivory Tower

By CHARLES C. CLAYTON

GERALD W. JOHNSON supplies the text for this diagnosis of what ails the American editorial writer. Writing in the September, 1950, *Atlantic Monthly*, Mr. Johnson set up as his thesis the conviction that "What this country needs is not the abolition of editorial writers, but more, many more, and better ones." Mr. Johnson, whose career provides convincing proof of his contention, continued:

"Editorial writing is, or ought to be, journalism's final and best contribution to society and the state. In view of the immensity and complexity of the volume of news now poured upon the American public, careful and skillful interpretation of the significance of that news is more important and more valuable today than it ever was before."

"An interpretation made by a detached observer with wide information and, above all, long experience in reading newspapers, can lead the average man to the truth in a fraction of the time it would take him to get there himself by floundering through the news with no guidance."

Reflection upon one phrase of the quotation started the train of thought that prompted these pot shots at the Ivory Tower. If "long experience in reading newspapers" enables the editorial writer to spot the truth, is it not logical to suspect that long experience in reading editorials enables the average reader to discern with the naked eye the subtleties of the editorial writer? As one who has served at least an apprenticeship in the "Brains Department," the answer seems embarrassingly clear.

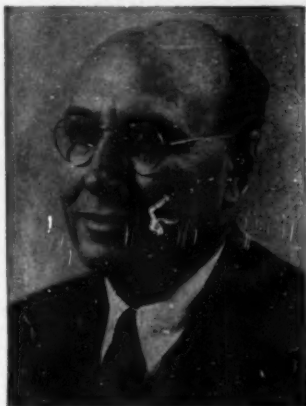
I USE the word "subterfuge" deliberately. Webster defines it as "that to which one resorts for escape or concealment." The subterfuges of the editorial writer are the phrases used to conceal lack of knowledge, lack of conviction or lack of courage. A stock phrase of the trade is "deserves careful study." A discerning reader would correctly interpret it as indicating either: (1) That the writer could not make up his mind, or (2) that discretion suggested a cautious approach pending further developments.

"A step in the right direction" is another face-saver. To the trained eye it telegraphs the conclusion that the writer is not sure what the goal is, or is equally uncertain as to whether the proposal will lead in that direction. The cautious phrase provides a neat escape from the horns of that dilemma.

Then there is the "afraid-of-its-shadow" approach, easily identified by the phrase "on the other hand." This handy gadget enables the editorial writer to fill half a column without ever coming to point or judgment, and at the same time to exude an aura of Olympian impartiality. An open mind is a virtue until it becomes, in the late Heywood Broun's definition,

"open at both ends like a tube and holding nothing."

A dead giveaway is the pompous phrase "something should be done about it." Any reader can translate what it really means—that things are in an awful mess and God only knows what to do. A more subtle example is the conclusion that "the responsibility rests squarely upon" (whatever pair of shoulders happens to be nearest at hand). Politicians long ago



CHARLES C. CLAYTON, St. Louis Globe-Democrat, asks better editorial page reporting and writing.

learned the effectiveness of this trick of passing the buck. No platform of the party out of power is complete without "viewing with alarm."

THE list might be continued ad nauseum, but the examples cited are dreary enough to underscore the moral. It certainly is not new. Words—and especially trite words—have long been painless substitutes for hard work and honest thinking. It is an eye-opening disillusionment to discover what an overdose of bromides editorial writers administer to their readers.

The following list was compiled from a three-day stint of reading the editorials in the newspapers of one city. It happens to be a community, incidentally, in which editorial page standards are considerably above the national average.

It comes as a shock to discover how often a "crisis" arises—almost as frequently as the public is confronted with an "alarming situation." Conceding that the world at the moment is in a pretty bad way, it is difficult to believe that calamity comes in such large doses. Even

"eternal vigilance" apparently cannot stave off the "emergencies" that face us.

The editorial writer, obviously appalled by this constant feeling of doom, warns his readers of the "stark realities" and "bald facts." These add up to "storm warnings" which usually are preliminary to a plea to "be realistic" and not to be fooled by "wishful thinking."

Occasionally he hedges with a phrase such as "we dare say," which seems about as obvious as "we venture to state." Even more cautious are the "matters of conjecture" and the "questionable moves." Then to prove he is a man and not a mouse, the editorial writer belabors his opposition as given to "threadbare arguments." Because the other side is "diametrically opposed" it must "bear the brunt." In short, he gives the opposition "short shrift."

If he is not sure of his facts, he is apt to attribute them to "Washington sources." If his side wins, it is always by a "thumping majority," which the reader knows means a "decisive margin." When the opposition cannot be identified, it is always a "special interest." Are you becoming bilious? All right, I'll stop, but there are many other phrases gleaned in my study, all of them equally soporific.

It seems reasonable to assume that the reader will react to this daily diet of "crises," "grave issues" and "paralyzing strikes" about the same way the citizenry did to the young man who cried wolf. It may also be assumed that the reader will soon cease to care whether the "ship of state" is on an "even keel," or even what political skulduggery the "city fathers" are up to at the moment.

THERE is another occupational hazard of the Ivory Tower—fascination with one's own words. There is a tendency in the "Brains Department" to confuse erudition with gobbledygook. Those who espouse high-dome prose are likely to expend their venom on Moscow these days with something like this: "The devious chicanery of the Kremlin has vitiated the agenda of the Security Council." What this means is that the Reds are raising hell again at Lake Success. This technique is a none too subtle way of looking down your nose at the reader. If he isn't too bored to care, he will soon catch on. Such insults can be found in our best editorial pages.

Sheridan summed it up neatly when he wrote:

You write with ease to show your breeding,

But easy writing's curst hard reading.

Sprague Holden, who has been an editorial writer on the *Akron Beacon Journal* and the *Detroit Free Press*, concurs in the diagnosis, and offers a prescription. Writing in *The Machead* last year, he pointed out that "A good editorial

[Turn to page 14]

Radio Has Vital Role if We Are Attacked

By CHARTER HESLEP

LATE Christmas Eve, 1943, the Eastern Defense Command got a "report" that a German aircraft carrier had eluded U. S. naval defenses and was "somewhere off the East Coast."

It seemed impossible. But, remembering Pearl Harbor, an intensive search was begun. Quietly—and confidentially—civilian defense chiefs from Maine to Florida were alerted "for a test." They were asked to give the warning no publicity.

With one exception, the message was handled as requested. The exception was New York City, whose colorful mayor, Fiorella LaGuardia, passed the word to the city air raid defense organization and, on Christmas Day, asked that the alert be broadcast. LaGuardia gave radio newsmen off-the-record hints that something serious was at stake.

Most radio editors, now seasoned volunteer censors, checked with the Defense Command. The latter was saying "Nothing to it." One major station, however, broadcast the alert at 1:59:30 p.m. Christmas afternoon. LaGuardia himself was issuing veiled warnings frequently over the city-owned WNYC. These announcements caused bewilderment and started rumors that soon had New Yorkers clogging the switchboards of the city's stations and newspapers.

The enemy carrier report was not broadcast but rumors had the Nazi warships off Boston, off Philadelphia, etc. One version had bombs falling somewhere in New England. A noted commentator insisted to the writer who was handling radio news in the Office of Censorship that he had "reliable confidential information that two Nazi carriers were off New York Harbor and the people had a right to know that."

By late Christmas afternoon, the situation became serious as the rumors led to the threat of panic in some sections of the crowded metropolis. City authorities asked for help. It was decided to set up an official alert giving the reason—the carrier report. This alert was broadcast at 6:30 p. m. The warning was knocked down at 9:10 p. m., again by broadcast. The "psychology" worked and jittery New York quieted down.

The carrier rumor never had any factual basis and later was said to have started in idle talk in a bar. There was nothing fictitious, however, about the shelling of Santa Barbara, Calif., on Feb. 23, 1942, or the hundreds of small balloon-borne Japanese bombs that fell on the Pacific Coast and as far east as Michigan in 1944. After some fumbling by the military, and with an assist from Censorship, news of the real attacks was handled so as to prevent panic and deny useful data to the enemy.

THESE World War II incidents emphasize the role of radio newsmen in the present emergency and point up their most important responsibility in event of attacks on our country in a future war. That duty is to keep the public as fully informed as possible, bearing in mind the differences between their medium and the printed word.

Among the differences are instantaneous dissemination, making radio news in most cases the first to reach the public;

the international aspect of a radio signal (wee-watters in the Middle West have been heard in New Zealand) and the terrific emotional impact of news by radio and television.

Before the last war ended, broadcasters and editors, civilian defense chiefs, the military and censorship had worked up standard procedures to be used when the enemy hit our mainland. They never were tested. The possibility of such assaults seemed—and was—remote. The devastating potential of atomic weapons was not revealed until a few days before fighting stopped.

This is not true today. The effects of atom bombs have been assessed carefully. We know a potential enemy has the power to strike not just some Pacific outpost like Pearl Harbor but in any of the 48 states, perhaps in your home town. (It is admitted that a determined effort, pressed with sufficient planes and bombs, would penetrate the best defenses to some degree.) This fact gives local and regional defense and preparedness events a new importance in the daily news budget.

Confusion exists now as always in uncertain times. But there is no confusion on one point: Radio newsmen have a vital duty now to report and interpret local as well as national news so that the people may be aided in making sound, common-sense decisions on public policy at all levels.

In summarizing a 45-minute talk to sta-

The radio-television public information chief of the Atomic Energy Commission tells how alert newscasters can save lives and avert panic by working closely with civil defense.

wire printer and read it. You need newsmen and they will get your station into the roots of your community."

The versatility of radio is a handicap to newsmen working in this field. A newspaper has a single objective—to gather and interpret the events of the day and get sufficient advertising to support a profitable news operation. In radio and television, there is no comparable singleness of purpose except that both must make money to survive.

On the air and TV screen, news always will be a minority segment of programming except for such outstanding agents as the outbreak of war or the death of a president. Too many station owners regard news as just a part of their required "public service" and never invest in trained reporters and editors.

ONE of the best boons to newsmen in radio has been the vigorous campaign of the National Association of Radio News Directors to prove to own-

Ten Crisis Rules for Broadcasters

1. **Keep your station strong**—Plow profits into defense
2. **Keep on the air**—Plan for physical emergencies
3. **Plan to fight panic**—Lives can be saved if bombs fall
4. **Build a strong newsroom**—Your greatest duty is to inform
5. **Be security conscious**—Don't be duped by a foe B-U-T
6. **Preserve your freedoms**—Keep censorship sensible
7. **Protect your plant**—Radio is a saboteur's target
8. **Face manpower shortages**—The armed forces have first call
9. **Enlist for civil defense**—Plan for mutual aid
10. **Work harder, plan harder, and keep calm.**

tion owners in Tennessee in December, the writer listed "Ten Rules for Crisis" in trying to define radio's role in defense. At least five of them seem to bear directly on radio news. They are:

Build a strong newsroom—Your greatest duty is to inform.

Be security conscious—Don't be duped by a foe.

Preserve your freedoms—Keep censorship sensible.

Enlist for Civil Defense—Plan for mutual aid.

Prepare to fight panic—Lives can be saved if bombs fall.

"Take a hard look at your newsroom," the Tennessee Association of Broadcasters were advised. "If you haven't got one, start planning to add a news department no matter how small your operation. But don't think you can build a creditable record in this field by simply having announcers tear copy from a radio

ers and managers that strong newsrooms pay off, both in service and prestige, and—perhaps more important in this era of greatly increased radio competition—in profits. This organization of professional radio newsmen has grown rapidly in size and influence in its brief five year history. It may become the radio counterpart of the old and powerful American Society of Newspaper Editors.

After several years' study, the NARND adopted at its 1950 convention a practical code of ethics. If this set of standards were in effect in every station, U. S. radio would be strengthened, particularly at the local and regional level, as a major news medium and better prepared for the present crisis.

The NARND code aims at divorcing from the handling of news some practices that are quite normal and proper for promoting the entertainment side of radio, such as overemphasis on per-

sonalities and the easy exaggerations and make-believe that are inherent in the "theater" aspect of the medium. One great step in this direction is for management to give the radio newsmen authority that measures up to his responsibility.

It does not mean that the entire tribe of "golden tonsil" announcers should be barred from radio newrooms. There are many examples of men who came into news via announcing who have proved their worth as good reporters. On the national level one might name George Hicks and Bryson Rash of ABC and Ben Grauer of NBC. There are others.

As draft quotas go up, manpower shortages will hit hard at trained newsmen and announcers because of the large number of young men on radio and television payrolls. So, some fast training of announcers as newsmen—and vice versa to the extent of editors also being newscasters—will be required.

Womanpower may again become a factor. The veteran Ken Miller, for many years news editor at KTUL, Tulsa, Okla., went through part of the last war with a competent all-girl newroom. Wilton Cobb at WMAZ, Macon, Ga., already has two women newscasters and their shows are sold to satisfied clients.

IT IS the responsibility of management to make sure that newcomers to the radio newrooms have basic training that emphasizes the importance of accuracy; the danger of frenzied, over-dramatized news presentation; the necessity for hard, factual reporting and a healthy skepticism that will make them question wire service copy when needed.

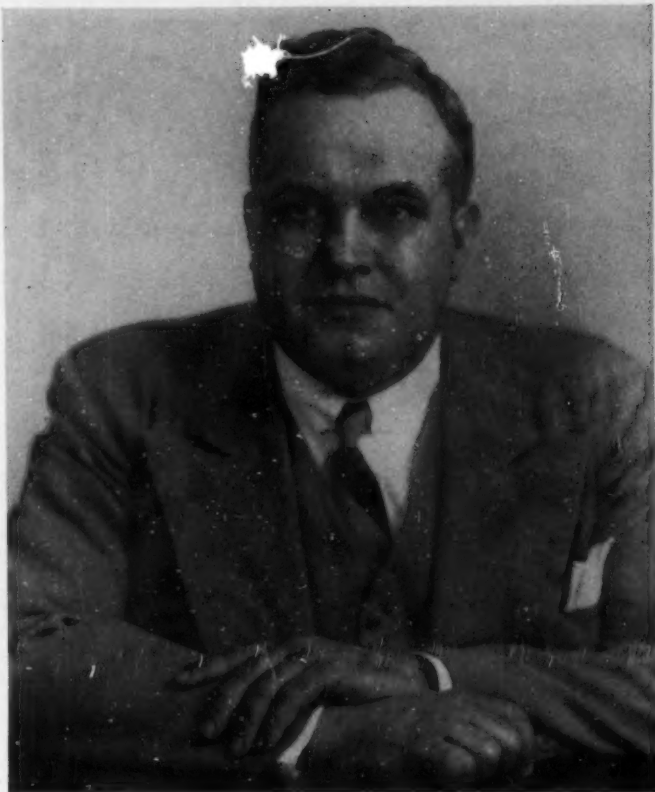
Announcers usually are very sponsor conscious. When they go into the newroom, they should be assured that they can give the news—good and bad—without fear of their jobs so long as the copy is accurate and reasonably objective.

Radio stations do not develop the specialized staffs normal to many newspapers. In the smaller markets, a one-man radio news operation probably will be competing with a small daily that has perhaps four reporters. Therefore, the broadcast news editor should be especially skilled in the use of the telephone.

Any man taking on what seem to be unfair odds in making his little radio news operation stand up to the better staffed local paper should read the first chapter in Abe Schechter's "I Live on Air" and take heart. Called "Telephonitis," it recounts the many scoops and beats turned up almost daily for the Lowell Thomas show by "arm-man" Schechter (later chief of NBC news and then vice-president of Mutual in charge of news). Abe spent most of his working hours with a telephone receiver on his arm. This was the era when wire services would not sell news to radio and newspapers threatened suits over lifting material from their columns.

Radio news has come far since those days in the early 30's when, as Schechter wrote, it was "the prize exhibit in American journalism's doghouse." Today, it has the facilities and opportunity for that "greatest duty—to inform." How well it does this in the days ahead depends on how well it staffs its newrooms.

TURNING now to the control of information, it is obvious that if war comes, some kind of censorship will be needed. What kind is the problem. Even in peacetime, "restricted duty" presents thorny dilemmas to agencies such as the Atomic Energy Commission. The AEC



CHARTER HESLEP, now chief of the radio-television branch of the AEC's public information service, is a veteran newspaper and radio news reporter and editor who also served as a radio censor in World War II.

tries to solve its difficulties on a common-sense basis, using a formula that is simple to state but hard to apply: Who will be helped the most by this release—we or they, "they" being a potential enemy.

There still are persons in high places who will advocate that the government take over radio in event of war. This thinking persisted throughout World War II. It had to be resisted as late as 1944 by Director Byron Price of the Office of Censorship. As volunteer censor, radio met its severest test with intelligence, resourcefulness and patriotism. It survived as an independent business enterprise. Theodore Koop, one-time chief deputy to Price and now director of news and public affairs for CBS in Washington, tells this story well in "Weapon of Silence," the unofficial history of wartime censorship under Price.

Radio newsmen, in the writer's opinion, must have unqualified and aggressive backing of management in insisting on voluntary censorship of domestic broadcasting, supervised by a civilian agency reporting direct to the President and staffed with top men drawn directly from the wire services and editorial desks of the nation's press and from the network

and station newrooms of American radio and television.

Preserving radio's freedom in times like today becomes a major responsibility of organized groups such as the NARND and the Broadcasters Advisory Council set up by the National Association of Broadcasters at White House request to act for the industry in the present emergency.

The fact that many stations are heard outside the United States has been—and can be again—used as a strong argument for compulsory control. It may be contended that such programs actually are "international communications" within the meaning of the First War Powers Act and thus subject to government censorship.

In another direction, the Air Force is proposing that the government take over radio because its signals provide beacons for enemy planes to ride to U. S. targets. The threat on this news sector is immediate and serious. However, President Truman recently assured broadcasters he did not envision the government taking over the media.

Writing in 1946, Koop said: "Should an-

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Most editors and publishers are "mental children," says the outspoken author of "Generation of Vipers." After writing a syndicated column of his own, he asks

What Freedom of What Press?

By PHILIP WYLIE

THE idea that American newspapers practice press freedom has always seemed cheerfully boyish and boyishly naive to this writer. The notion that ad-bearing periodicals of any sort are uninfluenced by their advertisers (made much of by a major publisher at the recent national convention of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalism fraternity) has also seemed to me either a lie, a daydream or a form of whistling in the dark. It would be wonderful if the press were free and if the space-buyers exercised no thought-control. Indeed, our only real weapon in the war with Communism is such freedom of mind and conscience as we Americans exhibit (not just protest). All other elements of the murderous dispute stem from their theory that men should be free and their thesis that "freedom" is the right of the state to do as it pleases.

If our attitude toward freedom of the mind were as clean-cut, as absolute, as self-aware and as militant as the Soviet attitude toward Kremlin ideology, it is possible, it is even logical and inevitable, that there would be no lurid loom of atomic war on the horizon today. That is a broad statement for which evidence will be offered in due course. And if it is a sound statement, it is also a ghastly measure of the failure of men who believe they are free to act like free men. But before the evidence is offered, certain lesser points need to be made. For our habit of imagining we participate in a free press is so ingrained that a single demurrer, however startling, will hardly budge it.

Not many journalists are in a position to make an empirical test of liberty and publishing. It is true that an editorial writer here and there and a few columnists have "latitude." Above or underneath some columns, various journals carefully assert that they do not necessarily agree with the author. (In a truly free press, of course, that cheap disclaimer would be unnecessary for everybody would know that agreement had nothing to do with the question.) But to tamper with general taboos, to violate "self-censorship," to cross lines of unconscious prejudice is not within the power of most journalists since none can subsist sans bread and butter. Instead, it is taken for granted that there are certain subjects not "suitable" for newspaper discussion and certain matters of "taste" that must be observed. Then, in spite of such evasions and observances, "press freedom" is still proclaimed.

THE author of this homily got into newspaper writing backwards, which is to say after contributing to dozens of magazines and composing for Hollywood and after publishing numerous books. He was, so to speak, born cosmic;

he became a columnist by invitation; he did not have the trained legs of a cub; denied to him was that background in sports-writing which, in America, is curiously regarded as all but essential for a newspaper Thinker; he didn't even know, at first, what "city desk" meant. But he had one small distinction, if not advantage: his bread and butter did not depend upon his antics in the press.

That lucky emancipation allowed me to make, over a period of two years, a calculated experiment with press freedom. I had a syndicated column noisily entitled, "Off My Chest," which was offered once a week by the George Matthew Adams outfit. I tried, about every other week, to supply my readers with innocent diversion, thoughts on the cuteness of kittens, a few nice phrases about springtime, or the like. But, on the odd weeks, I endeavored to present something in the nature of an idea, a criticism, a new scientific finding or a manifest but neglected moral fact.

ON such odd weeks, I ignored deliberately those vast barricades of taboo the press will not confess to. I was never vulgar or obscene or sacrilegious and very rarely personal. (To my mind, the press is all these, incessantly.) My columns were not libelous: none ever gave rise to a damage suit or court action. None could, for their essence was philosophical. All the criticism I wrote referred to ideas and to general behavior. And nothing I wrote would startle the congregation of any liberal church; it has been preached repeatedly in thousands.

Only one paper, the *Miami Daily News*, where my column originated, printed everything I wrote. Some papers subscribed for my column and used it often; others used it rarely. Many undertook to delete and even to re-write my pieces, turning them, occasionally, into meanings opposite the intended. Cancellations were continuous. At its peak, my column had only about thirty subscribers. With the passing of time, the syndicate's salesmen could not sell new subscribers as fast as old ones cancelled and the number of buyers steadily diminished.

When I had satisfied myself that I had explored and proven the precise limits of American press freedom, I gave up the effort. Lately, when I thought to resume it, another syndicate found that less than ten papers would run the risk of publishing me again. For all the rest, I was "too hot," "too controversial," "dynamite" and so on—though editors personally expressed themselves in scores as "liking my stuff."

What is it, then, that our press won't print? What's it afraid of and why? Where are these boundaries of freedom that shouldn't exist in U.S.A.?

I have the dossier—the evidence—the goods.

The very heart of what I believe and cherish and hold dear, what I revere, my religion, if you will, along with the inferences to be drawn from my faith—that is forbidden! Were I a nut, a freak, a fanatic or a crank, the censorship would be understandable and acceptable. My beliefs and my way of thinking and feeling, however, are shared by millions. And these millions are the most detached, the least emotional, the most intelligent and the best educated citizens of the United States! From tens of thousands of them I have personal letters urging me to fan my literary candle into a public bonfire! Essentially, the difference between those millions and the larger public is only this: they seek, continually, to know more; their minds are not anchored in and bordered by any particular dogma or doctrine.

What other honest description is there of the free man and his free mind? If ours is to continue a free land, who else can give it continuity? And if the press were free, to what more vital audience could it direct that portion of itself which is presumed to think?

To get down to the sort of thing I said that raised so much objection, I need first to define a little what I do believe. I am a religious man in that I believe the Universe has purpose, meaning, reason. I am a Christian in that I believe and try to follow the human precepts of Jesus. I am a patriot in that I believe my country to be the hope of the world. But—and here's the rub—I also believe mankind has infinitely more yet to learn than mankind knows! So I believe his pretenses to "absolute truth" are vain, pitiful and absurd. I believe that doubt is as necessary and noble as faith, that doubt is faith's other half of the route to wisdom. And I believe that what man learns pragmatically is valid, which is to say, I cannot accept any creed at variance with scientific knowledge whether it be communism or sun worship. In addition, I have a good grounding in the sciences and especially in modern psychology, which is the science of what happens within men.

That philosophical position is commonplace amongst the literate, even amongst church-goers. It is not in any sense "atheist." It supplies millions with ideals enough for behavior far nobler than that of multitudes who call themselves devout. But in my case, and in my column, I cloaked the attitude with emotion, with scoffing, with skepticism and ridicule—not for their own sake but simply to shake whoever would read and needed wakening.

ONE Easter, I wrote a column noting the pagan, pre-Christian origin of the celebration, the intact survival



PHILIP WYLIE, at ease in the "workshop" of his Miami home, resembles neither the benevolent Dr. Jekyll of the "Crunch" and "Des" stories so beloved of fishermen nor the alarming Mr. Hyde of "Generation of Vipers" and other slashing book and magazine attacks on the Genus American. Perhaps the photographer caught the saddened (if unreformed) newspaper columnist whose experiences with editors moved him to write this article.

of "spring rite" symbols—such as Easter eggs, and the American deterioration of the day into a fashion show. At the end, I asked what all that had to do with the crucifixion of Jesus.

Hundreds of ministers doubtless said the same thing that day or the week after, in their pulpits. But the appearance of such a message in newspapers (where that particular column had not been dropped) was startling to many, and infuriating. Bevis of outraged clergymen visited managing editors. Advertising was cancelled. One paper was forced to pledge to give up running anything I wrote by its souped-up space-buyers. Editors sent alarmed notes to my syndicate. When, on the following Christmas, I suggested that the ruling passion of that day had become store-fighting and an anxiety to get and asked, again, what shopping and getting had to do with the birthday of Jesus, the hullabaloo could be heard in Nome.

Such heat was intense and fascinating. I was told by various important Protestants that I could not "attack the church." I hadn't done so. I had only jeered gently at a common-place hypocrisy.

A leading Catholic layman informed me that it was "all right" for me to put "heretical" ideas in books because the common people didn't read books. But it

was "utterly wrong" for me to "undermine" the faith of masses. When I protested that I was trying merely to make their faiths less specious and to help them think, it turned out that in this layman's view making people think along philosophical lines or from scientific hypotheses is a public function to be opposed by every means.

After a few more such columns and more experience with religious blackmail in the business offices of the press I concluded that, perhaps to the average editor and certainly to the average citizen, "religious freedom" means the license to promulgate any "religious" shenanigan, by gangster methods if necessary. Handling deadly serpents, I believe, has been outlawed; but any behavior, bigotry or monkeyshine short of that, calling itself religion, is safe from press notice.

Under true "religious freedom" the attitude I tried to express in behalf of intelligent millions would be at least as welcome as any other. In Great Britain, the criticism of a dogma, of a sect, of a church—even ridicule where it seems due—is acceptable in a press intellectually far freer than our own. For here, at the very core of man's thought and study and knowledge, the clergy has choked the American press silent.

SEX taboos are even more familiar. The past half century has brought forth enormous new discoveries concerning the psychological aspects of sex and its actual social patterns. Freud and Jung have explained (for all who care to know) the real motives of much of our conduct which hitherto seemed, on detached observation, totally insane. In my column, I dealt occasionally (and very abstractly) with the new findings. I answered questions with the psychologist's new knowledge.

Why is the front page of every American newspaper an exercise in sadism? Why are Americans so sports-crazed and why is the craze largely for spectator sports? Whence our arena-appetite, that causes the press to give more space to the fisticuffs of local boxers than to a war? Why do we gamble so universally? Drink so much? Why are we not allowed to discuss copulation and reproduction, since these are not just human acts but common to the entire animal kingdom? Why is it that a girl will be arrested this year for wearing a costume every girl wears, next? What does an air-brush do to body-hair that makes an "obscene" photograph publishable?

It need hardly be said that such discussions were often refused printers' ink

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I Work for My Competitor

A reporter on a small town daily ponders the ethics of giving local news to a city rival while it's hot.

By "A STRINGER"

IF a Chicago-New York, Miami or Los Angeles-reporter tipped off an editor of a rival paper in the same city that his newsroom had just cracked open secret Kefauver committee testimony, the reporter would be promptly canned and his fellow newsmen would hold him to be guilty of highly unethical conduct.

Yet comparable situations occur every day with reporters and editors of small dailies who "correspond" and "string" for larger papers in cities near enough to be competitive. Is this ethical?

Take a quite small city and a reporter. (Both are synthetic. I wish to remain anonymous because my city editor corresponds for another daily and I share in his loot. I may live and work in any of the forty-eight states.)

Let's say the town, a county seat, has a population of 8,000, and is 40 or 50 miles from a city of five to ten times its population. The county has 35,000 persons. An editorial staff of six puts out an average of twelve pages a day and this is circulated to 7,000 homes in the city and county. The front page is split between 30 per cent national, world, and state news and 70 per cent local coverage.

The rest of the issue is broken down to a page of local news, one of "society" news, an editorial page and a sports page, and the remainder is divided 50-50 between wire service features and correspondence from the surrounding area. The correspondence consists of club items, who visits whom, parties, and bridge prize winners. It's good local interest stuff and sells papers.

LOCAL news sells the paper and is the paper's primary reason for existing. We are a one newspaper town. We have been one for many years. There aren't many two-newspaper towns with our population left in the country.

Yet we have competition. It comes from that city 40 or 50 miles away. Our city

circulation hits around 3,000 and the out of town papers run only some 500 under that. But my editor, with my help, is enabling the rival papers to sell here by supplying them with news from our city and county.

Deaths are good reading. We phone in our obituaries to the nearby bigger city. Any accidents? "String" them too.

Our deadline is 2 p. m. The deadline in the nearby bigger city is 10 a. m. So I have to wind up stories quickly which I should work on for hours. I could do a better job of local coverage if I did not have to meet our competitor's early deadline.

I call up our competitor collect. But I call on company time. So my paper is paying me, too, for cutting its own throat.

Sure my \$55 a week can use augmenting. And these papers pay nicely too. I average about \$5 a week for stringing and my editor gets more. The sports editor is paid better. He gets \$3 a basketball game, \$4 a football game, and up to \$5 for a baseball game.

Money isn't the only reason for stringing. It's good experience, it gives one connections, it may provide you with another job, and, if reciprocal relations can be worked out, may provide coverage on something big happening in the other city that affects our community.

Of the four reasons given above, three benefit the stringer personally and the fourth could do the paper some good. But the larger papers are shrewd. They still want scoops. So when two youths from our little city are picked up by police in the larger one as pickpockets, we read about it in their press. Their reporters and editors don't reciprocate by calling us.

MY superior gives this reason for stringing: If we don't cooperate with our bigger brothers, they'll send their own men down, and, then, pal,

watch out. He's afraid of competition.

It's funny that our newspapers, loudest advocates of free enterprise and competition, are so often afraid of a touch of competition for themselves. Our paper could use real competition. I am not saying our town could afford a second newspaper. All we need is one newspaperman to keep us on our toes, to eliminate that putting-off-to-tomorrow-what-should-be-done-today attitude, to dispel the notion that we are covering the town by reporting the Lions and the Association of Commerce, and to give us a measuring rod other than revenue.

If my editor permits stringing because he's afraid a strange reporter will come to town, he's doing himself and his readers a disservice.

Stringing for the press associations is of course not the same as reporting for a rival newspaper in your own field. They serve all newspapers and besides they are not interested in much of our local news. We would be derelict if we withheld news from them.

The Associated Press, if your paper is a member, is legally entitled to all local news and it is your paper's duty to give it to them. The problem here is the reporting by the individual reporter for his own personal gain.

THE questions I have raised are to be found throughout the country. We all know a multitude of sins is hidden by "Special" or "By Special Correspondent" or some other typographical device.

I did not write this article for money—as a professional magazine *THE QUILL* doesn't pay—and certainly not for the prestige of having an anonymous byline to show my friends. I am seriously disturbed about the ethics of taking money from my employer's competitor and serving two masters. I wonder what other newspapermen have done about this problem.

But there's a professional problem raised too, the solution of which may be disastrous for the smaller papers. For stringing may lead to a greater concentration of power in the big press and diminish the importance of the little press. We who string are undermining our reason for being—local news coverage—by supplying our bigger competitor with that commodity.

Wylie

(Continued from page 11)

and it need hardly be added that the clergy led the indignant descent of the "clean-minded" upon my very clean discussions. They endeavored not to keep sex out of the papers but to keep rational thought and new data about sexuality from appearing in the press. Other clergymen, of course, were trying to do exactly what I was. Liebman's "Peace of Mind," for example, it such an attempt. And Mgr. Sheen, when he undertook to show in the pulpit that psychoanalysis and the devil are cousins, found he had picked up a wasp's nest. In newspapers, however, the psychology of sex is either avoided or served up by pre-purged incompetents or even by dangerous ignoramuses.

Other media are, of course, as griev-

ously regulated, blackmailed, intimidated and "protected" (in the racketeering sense). The editor of one national magazine for whom I recently offered to do a series of sexually enlightened pieces told me in confidence that his last two efforts in that field (1) had resulted in the sending of a truck-load of clergy-needed mail to his publisher, (2) had caused so many advertisements to be cancelled as to put the journal in the red, (3) had brought a company official flying back from Europe to apologize and (4) had occasioned several menacing calls by potent divines.

All that, of course, is flagrant violation of half a dozen rights guaranteed people and the press by the Constitution.

Hollywood, however, neither tries nor pretends it tries to embody freedom. It hires its own censors to keep it from offending even the most pewee passel of organized bigots. And the thought that

an idea might annoy somebody has prevented radio from ever having a brain of its own of any type. Television is following suit.

RELIGION and sex are taboo areas in the press. So is business.

To make fun, say, of the fact that the American aristocracy consists mainly of salesmen and mechanics, is viewed dimly. To suggest that our passion for goods has nothing to do with goodness is regarded as a poor column idea. To argue that American automobiles kill more people than American wars and to say the reason really is that about half the people who drive should be debarred even from running scooters—is to "endanger production." It is "antibusiness." Even to hoot at the American man's way of killing time by killing wild animals and birds is unpopular. And it is not

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THE QUILL for February, 1951

What Radio Wants In Newsmen

By KARL KOERPER

He must be trained to write news and deliver it for the ear as well as to gather it and judge it.

RADIO news has developed a demand for a new type of newsmen. In the decade since Hitler rose to power and radio became the spot news medium of the universe, radio has been gradually evolving a species of newsmen until today we have a well defined set of qualifications which he must meet to become a member of that select class.

He should have the instincts of a good reporter, the judgment of an experienced news editor, ability to write for the ear instead of the eye and the voice and personality to be effective at the microphone.

Superman, eh? In one sense of the word, yes! It's a fact provable by the Hooper Reports and the firm position radio holds as the spot news medium that newsmen are meeting these requirements all over the nation.

Back in the early days of radio, not much importance was attached to news programming. Traditionally, newspapers were the dominant source of information. Broadcasters discounted the value of radio news and gave no thought to news broadcasts, their preparation or proper airing. This was even true of newspaper-owned and operated stations.

As for news personnel . . . that was unheard of. The announcers on duty simply tore the dispatches from the teletypes and read them . . . announcers who knew nothing about news and less about the material they were reading.

Then something began to happen. In the middle '30s, the increase in radio homes became more and more significant. Radio news programs likewise became more and more popular. More and more people were becoming accustomed to depending, at least to a certain extent, on radio for news.

And then . . . the crisis in Munich, and in rapid succession: The invasion of Poland, Pearl Harbor . . . you know the rest of the story. Radio news had come into its own.

THIS new responsibility of the station operator prompted an objective look at the radio news department which until then was non-existent. Stations began hiring men with newspaper experience. They began to improve news sources, coverage, preparation, schedules, and personnel. They realized that radio news had become their most precious commodity . . . and one of their greatest responsibilities.

There were those who felt that the phenomenal news audiences were nothing more than a war baby and that, come the end of the conflict, dependence on radio news would rapidly decline. The opposite has proved true.

The peak audiences of the war years have been dwarfed by a present-day audience that is larger than it has ever been. All our studies substantiate this state-

ment. In January, 1946, just six months after V-J Day, radio's news audience had increased 35 per cent!

A current study indicates radio has changed the entire concept of news. It indicates 95 per cent of all the families in the United States listen to radio and 74 per cent of them prefer news. And the constant increase in radio sets, in radio homes and in radio listening presages an even greater audience.

This simply means that more attention must be given to the selection, training and development of the personnel who man this phase of radio. The technique of radio newscasting has now become crystallized. Likewise, the elements which go into the making of a good radio newsmen have become more definitive.

At first, radio looked to the newspaper for help. Men with newspaper experience found their way into radio news rooms. Cubes with journalism degrees were also acceptable. It soon became apparent that journalism training in college and actual newspaper experience were not adequate. Radio newscasting was very much different in very many respects than straight journalism or straight newspaper experience.

In the first place, the average word count of a five minute news broadcast is about 750. The art of condensation without sacrificing clarity or coverage is a new one.

Then, there's the problem of writing for the ear instead of the eye. What the eye can catch, or re-read if it doesn't catch, is quite different from what the ear must catch without repetition. Sentence construction, word usage, leads, etc. . . all must be handled from an entirely different approach.

You've heard it said that the radio audience has the average intelligence of a twelve-year-old. I've heard some say it is pre-natal. That probably prompted that old maxim in radio that to get your message across, you first had to tell them what you were going to tell them . . . then you told them . . . and then you told them what you told them.

Another new factor introduced by radio news was the projection of that news over the air by the newsmen himself. That means that voice is a consideration; likewise, pronunciation, enunciation, emphasis, modulation, personality.

SO what qualifications do we seek in a man for our news staff? Perhaps it would be well to first brief you on how we operate in our own stations, KMBC and KFRM in Kansas City. As early as 1935, we came to the conclusion that radio news, to be properly handled, should be under the supervision of capable newsmen.

Without any reflection on established news services, we also felt that all news



AT THE MICROPHONE is Erlie Smith, veteran newscaster, doing the job described by Karl Koerper, managing director of Kansas City's Midland Broadcasting Company.

should be rewritten by our own staff to fit our own radio listeners in the area we serve. It was also apparent to us that radio news to be most effective should be put on the air by the man who prepared it.

These policies have been maintained over the years . . . and our newscasts have consistently earned gratifying ratings in a highly competitive market.

We have always insisted on the obvious prerequisites for a radio newsmen: A college degree with a major in journalism, actual newspaper or radio experience and a potential air personality.

Each year, as the profession progresses, our standards become higher. As to academic training, we heartily subscribe to the recommendations of the Council on Radio Journalism. They are:

1. That sound general education, usually gained in a four-year liberal arts degree program, is the minimum background acceptable for well-equipped radio newsmen.
2. That specialized training for radio news work must be basically news training—that it should not be open to any but students with thorough grounding in news judgment and values, news gathering and writing, news editing and the like (the kind of college and university training available only in professional schools of journalism).
3. That training in radio news work can be effectively offered only by men thoroughly qualified for the work—men qualified not alone by adequate teaching and educational experience, but also by competent radio and news work.
4. That a tendency to let "radio courses" mushroom in institutions not equipped to handle them, both in qualified personnel and in physical facilities, is to be discouraged—is, indeed, to be looked on in some cases (where superficial survey or technique courses masquerade as "professional education") as educational charlatany.
5. That training in radio journalism or-

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Clayton

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page ought to be lively all of the time. It ought never to be dull. Along with a constant search for subjects full of sass and vinegar, an equally constant search should be pushed for new ways to say things, especially the old things which recur for treatment cyclically. This second search is, in part, a matter of language—bull's eye metaphors, jet-propelled similes, euphetic analogies, grass-roots colloquialisms, haymaker verbs, and anything else that will inject bounce into prose.

Probably no department of a newspaper is as hamstringed by tradition as is the editorial page. One of the traditions of the Ivory Tower is that the reader expects editorials to be dignified. Dignity and dullness are not necessarily synonymous, despite the obvious evidence to the contrary. One of the things that is wrong with a good many editorial writers is that they take themselves too seriously and the job not seriously enough.

It is easier to sit back in a swivel chair and pontificate than it is to do the digging that needs to be done. A reporter's chores are beneath our dignity. Most of us were once reporters. We were at least

better than average reporters or we wouldn't be writing editorials now. If we are as good reporters as we tell ourselves we are, we ought to be able to scoop the young chap at the police station, or the state capital, or on the labor beat.

Instead of trying to figure out the solution to the municipal problem of the moment from the isolation of the editorial sanctum, we might try a trip to the city hall to talk to the men who are, or who should be, worrying about the same problem. Nine times out of ten, when we do that, we come up with a better answer than "something should be done."

FORTUNATELY there are indications that we are beginning to be uncomfortably aware that an "alarming situation" exists in our own bailiwick. The "pressing problem" was called to our attention by the syndicated columnists in the panel discussion at the recent Miami Beach convention of Sigma Delta Chi, journalistic fraternity. John Crosby suggested that columnists now exert more influence than editorial writers. **THE QUILL** in a recent editorial continued the debate. I am not yet willing to throw in the editorial sponge, but in any event I am convinced they are barking up the wrong tree when they suggest that the reason for the editorial page's lack of

influence is that columnists have "more freedom of expression."

Closer to the truth, I suspect, is that if editorial writers are shackled, the irons are of their own forging. Some of us may be bound by tradition, handcuffed by our bromides, and blinded by narrow vision, but for the most part the limitations on our freedom of expression exist largely because we never venture beyond them. There may be times when the editorial writer must adhere to office policy, but it is also true that the columnist who disagrees with a paper's policy can be effectively silenced by merely omitting his column.

There is no valid reason why the columnist should be a better writer, except perhaps the fact that his daily output may be less. There is no reason why the editorial writer cannot make use of the same flexibility of style, or even frankly air his pet peeves as do the columnists. The editorial writers of *Life* magazine prove this contention, as did William Allen White in his generation.

I am brash enough to dispute the logical inference of the Crosby contention—which is that the editorial writer is rapidly becoming the vanishing American. Like Gerald Johnson, I am not yet willing to write the obituary of the Ivory Tower. But I agree with him that what this country needs is many more—and better—editorial writers.

Heslep

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other conflict develop, the existence of atomic weapons would make the entire world a potential battlefield. . . . It is logical to assume that the Army would insist on stringent control of all avenues of communication—domestic as well as international. . . . Nor is it unlikely that compulsory censorship of information would be accompanied by an official review of editorial comment—if any expression of opinion was permitted.

"Such a prospect is a little short of disastrous. . . . As mankind enters the Atomic Age, the interdependence of all freedoms is more apparent than ever. . . . To every American, free speech and a free pen are prime guarantors of the whole catalogue of liberties."

Those words appear to have lost none of their validity today—five years later.

ONE sector of the mobilization front finds the radio newsmen in a much hotter spot than his press contemporaries. All popular pamphlets issued by the Federal Civil Defense Administration and its predecessor, the National Security Resources Board, stress the importance of radio as a means of communication in event of attack on our country. One of these handbooks says:

"Through broadcasting stations, timely civil defense information and educational material can be quickly presented to a maximum audience with a minimum number of persons required to prepare the information."

Further, in a narrative of a mythical atomic attack which assumes that some coast cities have been hit with underwater atomic bombs, the handbook continues:

"At 6:16 a. m., the governor telephoned the mayor of City X that he had just received information from intelligence au-

thorities that all important industrial centers could expect attack momentarily by airborne atomic bombs. Radio stations in all port cities officially announced, prior to 6:20 a. m. [Note time lapse—four minutes] that in event of atomic explosions, all persons would be safer if they remained indoors. . . . (Instructions to public followed)." (Emphasis supplied).

In civil defense movies seen by the writer, there comes the crucial moment when the hypothetical bombs fall. The camera goes VCU (very close up) to a familiar object—the radio on the table. Through its speaker come firm words of instruction and advice and a calm newscast of what is known to have happened up to that hypothetical moment.

Most radio and television scripts featuring interviews with civil defense chiefs stress the importance of keeping the radio on, of having auto and portable sets in good condition. The government pamphlet, "Survival Under Atomic Attack," says that "The bomb's radioactivity will not interfere with the operation of your radio. In event of attack, be sure to turn it on. It may be your main source of emergency instructions."

Here we have etched sharply the almost awesome and instant responsibility of the radio newsmen which sets him apart from those handling the printed word. Here is powerful proof of the need of calm, well-trained newsmen in our radio newrooms.

The time for fighting panic is at the instant of warning or fall of bombs. To be ready for this moment takes planning, "dry runs," and close cooperation with local and state civil defense authorities. It is the reason why radio newsmen in New York and New Jersey formed the two-state emergency network that will permit the entire area to be covered no matter what stations in a given city may be destroyed or unable to get power to stay on the air. In a matter of minutes, radio may save hundreds—even thousands—of lives by quelling panic.

A tested device for averting chaos is diversion and quiet advice. Recall the stories of actors preventing deadly stampede by "carrying on" when the theater was on fire; of the brave bandmen of the S.S. Titanic who played on until water rising over the sinking ship engulfed them. Reassuring words from a familiar voice may work effectively. The response may be as primitive as that of a frightened child whose fears are banished by quiet words from its mother. The newscaster on the local station may be that voice.

Newsmen and announcers who handle news should read carefully the civil defense and Red Cross literature. Then have them build standby programs ready for instant use in an emergency. Play back these platters before the entire station personnel and keep them where anyone can get them when needed. When the emergency comes, try to get a live voice on the air. If unavailable, put on the standby platters.

There will be gaps in the onrush of news bulletins. Telephones may be useless. Power failure may silence the news tickers. Official instructions from local authorities may be slow in coming. But the people will have been trained to turn on their radios. They will be frightened, may be panicky. A sample program might open with:

"The emergency for which all of us have planned has come. Until accurate news and official instructions from our civil defense leaders comes in, suppose we just talk over a few fundamental things we learned in our civil defense training. . . ."

The author is not a civil defense expert. But he has been told by some who should know that this suggestion might be developed into a valuable aid to local communities. It is just another facet in the added burdens that rest on the radio news editor in these days of hoping for the best, preparing for the worst.

Free Czech News: 1951 Model

By underground and mimeograph, devoted men tell world
what goes on in their captive democracy

By ROBERT E. BLACK

WOULD you like to have a worldwide corps of experienced and frequently distinguished editors, businessmen, technicians, educators, statesmen, and other eyewitnesses of important events working for your newspaper—for free?

In London, England, today these functions are the heart of such a group. In a mimeographed weekly bulletin these self-exiled and fugitive men detail the vicious, methodical, and sometimes almost comic current history of their captured people. They are bent on undermining as rapidly as possible the security of the government in their homeland.

This is the story all over again which befell most of these same Czechoslovaks in 1939 and was interrupted in 1945. But the black roles are played by Communists this time, not Nazis.

According to protocol the world should not believe these disciples of Thomas Masaryk and Eduard Benes. Their words are unofficial. And, in the past, the world has bought fraud dressed in high morality.

But *FCI*, the Information Service of Free Czechoslovakia, wills to be heard. They claim several worthwhile news beats. These include:

A 30-hour world beat in 1949 on Russian atomic explosion;

The self-exiling of Aja Vrzanova, world girl ice skating champion;

Details of a Czech communist plot for a false revolution in 1949, designed to lure real revolutionaries into the open;

The five-point communist plan since fulfilled for crippling the Roman Catholic church in Czechoslovakia.

THE London editor for *FCI* is 37-year-old Josef Josten. Josten has the most official nod yet given *FCI*; he is accredited as a foreign correspondent by the British Foreign Office.

He started *FCI* in April, 1948, financing it by writing outside articles. Bulletins began to appear regularly in February, 1949. They went to radio stations, writers, forum societies, politicians and schools, as well as newspapers.

Indirect quotations appeared in the *New York Times*, *Figaro*, *London Times*, *Berlinische Tidende* and other papers. In June, and again in September, 1949, *World's Press News* noted *FCI*'s reliable, if sometimes incredible, information about events inside Czechoslovakia.

Weltwoche, a leading Swiss weekly, last February called *FCI* "The Fear of Gottwald." Gottwald is president of Moscow's regime in Czechoslovakia.

Josten calls the article exaggerated, but he is proud when he writes about "*FCI*, the smallest news agency in the world, which had a world beat on the Soviet atomic blast."

According to the *London Evening Standard*,* six celebrating Czech minis-

ters, back safely from Russia, talked about Russian atomic plants, about explosions, and about Russian and German scientists killed. Their stories checked with what Josten's friends knew, so the facts went to London and Josten.

An explanation of the ministers' trips lies in Russian use of rich Czech uranium ores and necessary liaison in the exploitation.

F*CI* is fed by a voluntary news network. News and tips come from worldwide sources.

These sources are in official and private circles in Czechoslovakia, in other countries behind the Russian wall, in Germany and around the world, where persons have sources in and around the captive democracy.

Most stories come by private routes and reach Josten by mail or messenger. He operates on a \$500 a month budget, so he can scarcely afford speedier transmission.

The *FCI* bases beside London are in Prague, Bern, Oslo, Brussels, Hilversum (Holland), Copenhagen, Ludwigsburg (Germany), Stockholm, Washington, D. C., Chicago and Cleveland.

The London office publishes the English edition, the Copenhagen office a Scandinavian edition, the Ludwigsburg office a German edition, and the Chicago office a Czech edition.

The weekly, single-spaced bulletin of (usually) four airmail paper pages has each story numbered, identified by a headline, and signed in code letters (e.g. *FCI/AB*). On the masthead is date, volume, and a number of the issue. A typical issue has a dozen to fifteen items and a special editorial by Josten or a displaced diplomat.

The Council for a Free Czechoslovakia, with headquarters in Washington, D. C., is Josten's biggest overseas subscriber. Council leaders include Petr Zenkl, pre-Red cabinet minister and mayor of Prague, Dr. Josef Lettrich, former Slovak Democratic party leader, and Jan Papasek, former Czech United Nations representative.

Josten says *FCI* gets no funds from the Council, has never been asked to make any political concession, "would not tolerate any pressure," but that cooperation between the two has so far been complete.

THE *FCI* began in 1948 with borrowed money and 250 copies of Bulletin 1, distributed free by mail; now a subscriber system operates, and circulation is more than 1,000.

Bulletins go to twenty countries. American embassies in London and Prague each get seven copies and the British Foreign Office five copies weekly. At least one paper, the *London Times*, airmails the bulletin to its Vienna correspondent.

In July, 1949, the *Times* carried a story from the "Times Correspondent Lately



ROBERT E. BLACK, St. Louis Star-Times reporter who has revisited Czechoslovakia since wartime service there, tells how *FCI* operates today.

in Prague" with thirty-nine mentions of things *FCI* had printed in the previous seven months.

One knotty problem for Josten is the fact that most users of *FCI* bulletins consider them information for propaganda purposes. So they do not pay and do not credit *FCI*.

Josten prints stories apparently so fantastic that papers and news services won't use them. If more than barely credible they are not used intact because facts can't be checked. For *FCI* is handicapped. If news sources are to be kept open—in fact, be kept alive, they must remain anonymous.

All this compromises *FCI*'s claim as a commercial news agency, forwarded proudly by Josten. He cannot report, lodging credit and responsibility for statements where they belong. He does not present various sides of issues. He cannot give a client "500 words from the finance minister on his new budget."

Also, recognition of *FCI* would throw "lie" at CTK, official Czech news agency, and might result in little less than the end of U. S.-Czech diplomatic relations, which are still of some value.

"WE are carrying on our work to fulfill the ideals of Jan Masaryk," Josten writes: "I started empty handed in 1948, I am still empty handed, but I am still running the bulletin . . . that is the thing."

Josten was also empty handed in London in 1946, after escape, capture, and a second escape through the Balkans, Middle East, North Africa, and France.

After wartime psychological warfare work he worked for Masaryk's ministry until the "February events" of 1948. Then again to London.

The *FCI* may go on giving reliable service to individuals and groups who are aware that they get a very inadequate picture of Czech events via nor-

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*Sept. 24, 1949.

What Freedom of What Press?

[Concluded from page 12]

possible to criticize or deplore a nationally advertised product or gadget as such. But the worst sin is simply to be "depressing!"

My column, begun during the war, took the steadfast view from Hiroshima on, that America faced these alternatives: Either the world must at once be made free and open and without iron curtains, or a period of atomic armament and terror would begin in which the U.S.A., ten times as powerful as the Soviet Union in 1945, would rapidly decline in relative strength while her peril swiftly and horribly increased. In 1945 (as I kept saying in 1945), we had only to demand a free world to get one; Russia was a wreck. And we had the right and the duty to make the demand because a Russian "iron curtain" would impose a new and frightening secrecy on us—an ending of the freedom of knowledge here in America. Such a circumstance, I said, would constitute an intolerable act of aggression against us. To lose time in seeking its redress was not only to fail to see the importance of liberty but also to permit the Soviets to gain, steal and discover the means, if not to destroy us, at least to involve us soon in an all but unimaginable war.

The atomic bombs haven't arrived at this writing but all else evil that I predicted has happened exactly as predicted. To my mind, universal freedom of knowledge is the self-evident first principle of a species which today has imperfect knowledge. No other principle can usefully replace it. Had the American people been of the same mind in 1945, there would be no tyranny in the Kremlin now and no imminence of radioactive warfare. Had even the American press owned true insight into the core of freedom and embodied a sense of real responsibility for the meaning of liberty it might, alone, have led the people to the realization of a historic crisis, a mighty opportunity, and a tremendous duty, cheap then, God knows how costly now!

The chance went by—five years of it—unnoticed by nearly all, undefined by anybody but me. Those few who talked even resistance did so in the sickly terms of "preventive war." What was called for, what cried for support, was a great crusade for world freedom. It never developed. And my columns on the subject—today's plight written out in advance—cost me paper after paper on the grounds that I was too busy to bear, a nut, and bad for business.

Indeed, the newspapers in their persons of publishers and editors, hardly knew enough science to understand the press association dispatches on atomic energy which they felt obliged to run. There is summed up the reason for the august absences in liberty in the American press! Science is not something set opposite to religion. It is not a batch of specialties. It is not "materialism" as distinguished from "humanities." Science is simply the raw material of knowledge, of education. It is a continuing separation of what we learn from all we guess, superstitiously believe or imagine. What was science yesterday is current events now and will be tomorrow's history. It is the unending book called the evolution of man's mind. Not to know all about it in 1950 is to live in some different period

—perhaps 1925, possibly 1900, in too many cases, the Middle Ages.

When the first A-bomb went off hardly a newspaperman understood what had happened, exactly. And yet, not to understand was to display a total lack of interest in, a total ignorance of the 20th century's brilliant findings about the true nature of man's environs: the universe. Intellectually, it was like being on a long voyage without having bothered to look at the sea. Few publishers and not many editors then or since have bothered to learn the known, scientifically speaking. Even if, out of curiosity or fear, they have puzzled over nucleonics, they have hardly gone on to find what is known in astrophysics, anthropology, psychology and elsewhere. As far as A-bombs were concerned, they were unable to think in terms of freedom—of our shocking suddenly-obiterated freedom of knowledge—because the knowledge made secret was knowledge which they neither had nor proposed to get.

IN many other vast areas of truth, fact, thought and speculation, the same men are exactly as blank-minded.

They have a religion or, perhaps, a lack of religion which nevertheless is supinely "respectful" of anything that calls itself religion even though it sabotages freedom to own a voice.

They have a code of sex manners, a black-white, clean-dirty, printable-unprintable, small boy code. They know about people superficially, about politics and games, economics and history, business and society. It isn't an up-to-date education but they think it is. They assume that what hurts business hurts America and never stop to wonder if any painful new truths might have a long-range benefit to business and America far greater than the last drop of immediate profit and dram of present pleasure.

All such publishers, and that is nearly all, and all such editors, and that is most, were and are mentally children, adult infants, grown-up adolescents, which is why I said at the beginning that their dream about "press freedom" is boyish: they didn't know and still don't know enough to appreciate what needed to be made free that was throttled, or kept free that went into secrecy, while they turned out the nation's papers.

Now, we are embarked on a world conflict of ideas that will probably be followed by a struggle among atomically armed nations. But nowhere in our media of mass articulation do we embody the freedom for which we stand. It is no wonder that arms rather than ideas will probably decide the issue!

I WAS interested when I finally abandoned my column, to observe that the three fields where I was pressed toward silence—religion, sex and business—were the three areas in which the greatest contributions to modern psychology have been made.

Jung offered the idea that what is instinct in speechless beasts becomes, in man (through personification, symbol and legend) that which man calls religion. Freud found the sexual components of most of our motives. And Adler, studying power complexes, "inferiority," and the

drives of ambition, explained the impelling mechanics of the businessman's personality. Each of the three illuminating hypotheses emerged from western man's "unconscious" or "subconscious" mind; each opened long vistas of truth man either had not viewed before or else had hidden from his guilty aware mind.

It may therefore be said that an experimental columnist can easily uncover in the press those same inhibitions and taboos which were found by the psychologists in the whole of occidental society. No great news. But I found it fun, while it lasted, to see the Fourth Estate convulsed with terror by thoughts which have been incorporated in the heads of all knowledgeable people for a quarter of a century. I found it slightly revolting, also, to learn that men who boast about press freedom and their own editorial independence consider themselves free only through ceaseless evasions; half of liberty is no more liberty than half a ship is a sea-going vessel. The existing situation, indeed, is appalling to all who believe the affairs of men must or ought to be governed by reason and justice.

It could be changed. It could be changed not by employees of the press but by its ownership. If capitalism and liberty are consonant, as I believe, then capitalists are obliged to maintain liberty. If they fail, they will lose their property to the state, whether on the left or on the right.

To maintain freedom they need an association of their own (to which they would do well to invite the owners of the movies, the radio and television) dedicated to the rejection of pressure from anywhere by anybody. The individual newspaper should never be boycotted or blackmailed for printing opinions contrary to some special dogma or prejudice. That is disgraceful. It should go the other way around. Those viciously un-American sub-citizens, however self-righteous they imagine themselves to be, who try to use money-pressure to inhibit free talk, should be refused advertising space in the whole press of the land until they learn what land it is they are lucky enough to live in. And those moral aliens who, as individuals, try to gag, muzzle or boycott enlightened criticism or new ideas should be exposed personally at every attempt through the nation-wide efforts of an ownership that knows what Americanism is.

The dwindling power of capitalism today, the increase of federal potency, is owing at bottom to the failure of American ownership to study, practice and expand the foregoing philosophy of freedom. As men yield faith in and fealty to freedom they lose not just its intellectual and social benefits but also its fiscal advantages. The grey smog of statism overspreads and stultifies the coupon-clippers faster even than the laboring classes. The American press lately has often led and always kept abreast of this drab parade to nowhere. Ownership, alone, can change the direction of the march. But the owners cannot go on being intellectual adolescents who imagine that cunning, money and power are proof of maturity.

I have always held that freedom and capitalism are congruent, with enhanced responsibility for the former following ineluctably upon acquisition of the latter, and I have always told all who disagreed to jump in the river.

What a crowd of irresponsible ones is in the river, now! And just upstream, the biggest flood crest in human history.



THREE BOOK EXPERTS who appeared before the recent meeting of the American Association of Sunday and Feature Editors at Columbia University had some good advice for members about improving their book review sections. From left, George Beebe of the Miami Herald, 1950 AASFE president; Burton Rascoe, New York author and critic; Frederic Dannay, who represents one half of the Ellery Queen writing team, and John T. Winterich, Saturday Review of Literature.

Criticism Pays Off — By GEORGE BEEBE

Sunday editors from coast to coast improve their pages by frank appraisal.

THIRTY-THREE newspapermen who can take a lot of criticism—and dish it out, too—are helping to make their Sunday editions more readable and more eye-catching.

They are members of the American Association of Sunday and Feature Editors, an organization that grew out of an American Press Institute seminar at Columbia University four years ago.

The eighteen members of that seminar discovered that the problems they had long considered purely local were really the problems of every metropolitan newspaper.

So they decided to tackle these problems together. The group organized at the suggestion of Garrett Byrnes, Sunday editor of the Providence Journal, and has continued to swap ideas that would improve the appearance and content of their newspapers.

The most valuable part of the AASFE program is the critical survey of member newspapers. Nearly a full day of every convention is devoted to eyeing each other's newspapers. A dozen copies of each publication are distributed around the conference table and the editors offer frank comments and criticisms as they thumb the pages.

Bad makeup practices come in for the most caustic observations. There also are punches thrown at poor art layouts, unbalanced pages, poor selection of headline type and antiquated standing heads.

But all is not criticism. A well-edited and "arty-dressed Sunday section is praised, and its editor urged to give details of its production.

In the first rounds of these clinics, unflattering comments stung a bit. There was a tendency for editors to leap to the defense of their policies.

But upon closer study of these observations, they realized that many of the criticisms were justified. They had been producing their Sunday newspaper in a manner so routine that some of the weak points had not been visible to them or to other editors on the paper.

If there have been any feelings hurt over these critical surveys you'd never know it. Because they all keep coming back for more. Several AASFE members have altered the entire makeup design of their Sunday and feature sections from suggestions picked up at these surveys. And they are very happy with the results.

There's an exchange of newspapers for critical survey during the year, too. A schedule is drawn so that two or three newspapers a month are received by each member to inspect and return a letter of comment.

In convention sessions, a variety of topics is rolled out for discussion such as rotogravure production, readership surveys, the best received features and comics, pepping up real estate pages, photographic problems and wedding picture policies.

Frequent newsletters edited by members tell what other editors are doing in the way of new features or new promotions. And throughout the year some members devote considerable time to surveys of problems in which their publishers and editors are vitally interested.

DURING the last year, for example, AASFE tackled three major projects that required collective action. Two of these were supervised by E. J. Strong, Sunday editor of the Los Angeles Times and 1951 president of AASFE.

For three years Strong had heard members express dissatisfaction with the woeful

lack of book advertising in most Sunday book sections. They told how their publishers resented the fact that a handful of newspapers received practically the entire book plum while others, which devote almost equal space to reviews, got hardly a crumb.

When Strong's report of his year-long survey was given at last November's convention in New York, two representatives from Doubleday and Co. offered the publishing house side of the discussion.

Points in question were cleared for both sides and there appeared some hope of rectifying the inequality in book advertising distribution. The campaign will continue.

Another subject which Strong is surveying is Hollywood coverage. None of the Sunday or feature editors in AASFE is satisfied with the type of publicity which the film capital is handing out. When Strong gets the viewpoints of all members on what their editors want, he plans to lay the matter on the desk of the Johnston office.

BILL WHITE, Sunday editor of the Pittsburgh Press, has gone to bat on the project to get uniformity of Sunday comics as regards type faces, mat sizes and placement—a real headache for newspapers which print their own comics.

White had to put the blame on the publishers for not standardizing their page sizes. In a half dozen newspapers he checked, he found a spread of from 15 to 15½ inches in width and from 21½ to 23 inches in depth.

He found the syndicates willing to standardize heads and mat sizes. The next move is up to the publishers.

Such is the program of AASFE. Members

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dinarily can be made effective only in teaching disciplines devoted to broad preparation for work in mass communications. It is not likely, in the Council's opinion, that effective radio journalism training can be offered in English, theater and like disciplines, nor in most speech departments.

6. That effective courses cannot be offered without professional equipment for study, practice and experiment; that such equipment must include not only full library and reference facilities but also well-planned practice studios, with turntables, record libraries, recording instruments and other such devices; that opportunity for actual broadcasting must be provided for most effective training; and that equipment for this work must be kept reasonably up to date—a problem of special difficulty because of rapid technological advances.

TRULY, radio news has developed a demand for a new type newsmen. The radio newsmen drops in the living room of the home and reports the news to the whole family . . . grandma, father, mother and the kids . . . adults, teenagers, men, women . . . all in one group.

He drops in the hospital room to report to the sick. He is reporting to the businessman, the factory worker. He is talking to the entire cross-section of the population, all at one time. This he must remember when he treats many types of news stories, suicides, accidents, deaths, crime.

In a word, he's a newsmen who's a jack-of-all-trades. He's a man who can do anything and everything in the news profession—from getting and writing a story to deciding editorial policy. He must have imagination, initiative, personality, showmanship, and a voice that's acceptable to listeners.

He must be a combination of the newspaper workers all rolled into one. He must be a reporter, rewrite man, desk man; and editor—plus possessing the ability to put a broadcast on the air and have it sound like he knows what he was talking about.

The radio newsmen must know how to get and write a story; to evaluate its worth as to length and position in a broadcast, and then to air it in an acceptable manner.

He must know the value of condensation; the knack of saying much in a very few words. He must avoid the repetition

Industrial Editors To Attend Course At Oklahoma A. & M.

"COMPANY Communications in Time of Crisis" will be the theme for the fifth annual short course for industrial editors, sponsored by the Society of Associated Industrial Editors and be given by the Oklahoma A. & M. College. Plans for the course on the Stillwater campus, March 12 to 17, are announced by Clement E. Trout, head of the department of technical journalism.

The week of organized study and laboratory practice will cover editorial content, presentation, writing and production of company publications, both internal and external.

Art, layout, and production will be under the direction of Otto M. Forkert, president of O. M. Forkert & Associates, Chicago, graphic arts consultants. Merritt Whitmer, director of publications for Swift & Company, Chicago, will handle the editorials and writing phase of the course.

Special sessions on external magazines will be under the direction of Edward R. Sammis, editor of *The Lamp*, Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey. In addition to magazine editing and production, lectures will also cover fiction writing, photography, public relations, and government relations.

of words that annoy the ear; he must select words that are pleasant to the listener. He must write as he talks. This above all else is most essential to the radio newsmen. Until he acquires this trick, he won't be convincing and authentic to the listener. Until he acquires this trick, he'll be just another reader of the news—not a newsmen reporting the news.

IT goes without saying that the radio newsmen has a terrific responsibility.

He gathers, writes, and airs a radio newspaper many times with no supervision. He must be a man who thoroughly understands the implications of libel or slander.

The radio newsmen must be pleasant as to personality. This shows up instantly on the air and it's over the air that he establishes his reputation. He must be able to project his personality through the microphone.

The radio newsmen must be accurate and he must be honest . . . accurate in his handling of the news, and honest with his news sources. He must be fair, also, in his handling of the news—making certain all controversial elements of a story are treated adequately.

In other words, we want men who are adequately and basically trained for radio news . . . men who instinctively have a nose for news and a natural aptitude for putting words together. We want men who possess and exercise judgment. We want men who know and understand the words accuracy and with clarity.

We want men who know radio and the radio audience and who can exercise good taste with respect to that audience. We want men who can assume that responsibility inherent in the dissemination of news by radio and who can discharge that responsibility in the public interest. We want men with pleasing voices and pleasant personalities . . . men who love people and enjoy serving them.

Black

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mal channels—if it can find honest money for expenses.

If it lives until a western-recognized Czech government again exists, legitimacy might come its way. It might supplant CTK, in name or position. It might be the free agency CTK once hoped to be. Until then, it seems, FCI will likely remain an unattached, though high-principled and valuable, propaganda agency.

Beebe

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bership is purposely limited so as to keep conventions on an informal workshop-seminar basis.

One of the main drawbacks to survival of AASFE has been the vast distances of our country. With a membership that reaches from Los Angeles to Miami to Boston to Portland, Ore., it always has been problematical as to the number who could get away for conventions.

But now that publishers have been convinced that work comes before pleasure in AASFE, its future is pretty rosy. Tough-skinned AASFE members have proved that criticism can pay off.

George A. VanHorn (Wisconsin '43), is on leave for graduate study at the University of Wisconsin from his job as extension editor at the University of Massachusetts.

Henry W. Corrow Jr. (Boston '48) is farm editor of the Burlington (Vt.) *Free Press*.

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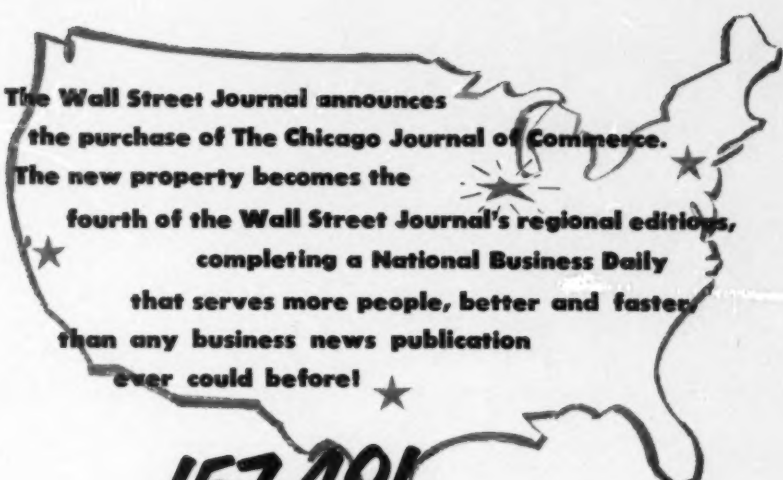
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